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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [SNAR](#) [CO](#) [VE](#)
SUBJECT: FARC ADOPTS BOLIVARIAN RHETORIC

Classified By: ACTING POLITICAL COUNSELOR DANIEL LAWTON
FOR REASON 1.4 (D)

11. (C) SUMMARY. The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) appears to be incorporating "Bolivarian" rhetoric in Venezuela. The Embassy obtained a copy of the 2007 FARC manifesto (also available on the internet) from a contact who said it was being distributed in a government-run school in a poor area of Caracas. In the document the FARC claim that they are leading a "Bolivarian" movement for a "new" Colombia, which includes the creation of a National Constituent Assembly to draft a new constitution, renegotiation of contracts with multi-national companies, and ending U.S. "interference" in the country. It remains unclear whether such FARC propaganda is an effort by the FARC to appeal to Venezuelans, or an effort by the Venezuelan government to elevate the FARC's image. END SUMMARY.

FARC Going Bolivarian?

12. (SBU) The 2007 FARC manifesto (also available on the internet) outlines the group's plans for a "new" Colombia and a new government while lambasting the Uribe administration and U.S. influence. Post is pouching a copy to WHA/AND. The manifesto makes frequent references to Simon Bolivar, the Liberator of Venezuela, Colombia and other parts of South America, saying that the proposals of the "Bolivarian Movement for the New Colombia" come from the Liberator's political and social plan. While written reference to the FARC's "Bolivarian" movement has previously appeared, Alfonso Cano, commander of the FARC following Manuel Marulanda's death, wrote that the Bolivarian aspects of the movement started clandestinely in April 2000, a year after Chavez came into power. (Although the FARC itself has been around for decades.)

13. (SBU) The plan for the "new" Colombia uses terminology often used by Chavez such as "Our America" or "the great homeland" to emphasize the importance of unifying Latin America through socialism. The plan also mentions revising military and trade treaties while denouncing neoliberal politics. A restructuring of the Colombian government is also part of the plan, in particular, the creation of a unicameral legislature like Venezuela did through its 1999 constitution, drafted by a National Constituent Assembly. The FARC also includes in its platform a mandate saying that 50 percent of the government budget should be spent on social welfare. Social welfare is similarly important for the Chavez government, and according to official figures accounted for 57 percent of the Venezuelan budget in 2006.

14. (C) COMMENT. While the Venezuelan government denies connections to the FARC aside from hostage negotiations, the

merger of FARC and Chavista ideology and charged terms such as "Bolivarian", "integration of South America", and the call for a new constitution, suggests that a Bolivarian platform is being used to try to bridge relations between FARC members and Venezuelans. It is unclear whether this effort in Venezuela is being promoted by the FARC or the BRV, or both.
END COMMENT.

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